

Sports

Backyard wrestling starting to grow in Saint John

CBC Sports · Posted: Jul 12, 2005 1:57 PM ET | Last Updated: July 13, 2005

There's a new grassroots sport growing in Saint John — one that involves real blood, bare-fisted punches and pain.

This sport, one the participants call "extreme wrestling," is similar to what professionals do on television. Only the wrestlers don't have any training and everyone puts their bodies at risk.

"We love pain and we love doing this," said Adam Kraft of the Passion for Pain Wrestling Organization. "Everybody loves wrestling and the more hardcore it is, the more they love it."

In a typical match, wrestlers will smash each other with chairs, ladders and tube lights. They also land kicks and bare-fisted punches to the head and stomach.

Kraft says the moves are choreographed and the wrestlers don't try to cause serious harm.

This type of wrestling is called extreme because the participants know they'll feel some real pain. By the time they leave the ring, most of them are bleeding from cuts all over their bodies.

Kraft was crowned the top wrestler at last Sunday's event, which participants dubbed the Carnival of Carnage 2. His championship belt was made with a piece of cardboard and an ink pen.

The show drew about 75 spectators, many of them children and teenagers from the tough streets of Saint John's north end.

They gathered around the makeshift, backyard ring, screaming encouragement to their favourite wrestlers.

One young fan said he never missed one of the backyard shows.

"It's what I want to do when I grow up. I want to be a wrestler," he said.

Despite the danger involved in the matches, Saint John police say they can't do anything because they're not illegal. As long as Kraft and his friends don't charge for the exhibition, it involves consenting adults and is held on private property, the law won't get involved.

"It's our bodies, so if we're willing to do it, they should let us take it into our own hands," Kraft said. "If someone doesn't like it, don't watch."

None of the half-dozen members of the Passion For Pain Wrestling Organization has been severely injured. But Jeff Dunning said he realized it could be dangerous after he had his ear sliced in two.

"The foldup chair opened up, and it was a little bit opened, and when I got hit it closed on my ear. But, we controlled it pretty good."

The wrestlers say their dream is to turn professional some day. But if that never happens, they say they'll always enjoy spending occasional Sunday afternoons together, beating each other up.

Courtesy CBC New Brunswick

POPULAR NOW IN SPORTS

1 ANALYSIS

Women are dominating Canada's performance at the Olympics — and we shouldn't be surprised

2 Olympic wake-up call: Oleksiak writes Canadian history, Biles and Black drop from all-around

3 FREE-AGENT FRENZY

Zach Hyman reportedly bolts Leafs for Oilers while Flames add Coleman, Zadorov

4 Maude Charron shares weightlifting gold with Canadian denied triumph in 2012

5 OLYMPIC NOTEBOOK

Olympic skateboarder stuck in quarantine calls lack of fresh air 'inhuman'

©2021 CBC/Radio-Canada. All rights reserved.

Visitez [Radio-Canada.ca](https://radio-canada.ca)